

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:

see form PCT/ISA/220

PCT

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY (PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
see form PCT/ISA/220

FOR FURTHER ACTION
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.
PCT/JP2004/010544

International filing date (day/month/year)
16.07.2004

Priority date (day/month/year)
18.07.2003

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
C08F20/06, C08F2/10, C08F2/48

Applicant
NIPPON SHOKUBAI CO., LTD.

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☒ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☒ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA"). However, this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of three months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

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**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/JP2004/010544

Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
 - ☐ This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - a. type of material:
 - ☐ a sequence listing
 - ☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing
 - b. format of material:
 - ☐ in written format
 - ☐ in computer readable form
 - c. time of filing/furnishing:
 - ☐ contained in the international application as filed.
 - ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 - ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/JP2004/010544

Box No. II Priority

1. ☒ The following document has not been furnished:

☒ copy of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed (Rule 43*bis*.1 and 66.7(a)).

☐ translation of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed (Rule 43*bis*.1 and 66.7(b)).

Consequently it has not been possible to consider the validity of the priority claim. This opinion has nevertheless been established on the assumption that the relevant date is the claimed priority date.

2. ☐ This opinion has been established as if no priority had been claimed due to the fact that the priority claim has been found invalid (Rules 43*bis*.1 and 64.1). Thus for the purposes of this opinion, the international filing date indicated above is considered to be the relevant date.

3. Additional observations, if necessary:

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43*bis*.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-12
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-12
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-12
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

see separate sheet

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING
AUTHORITY (SEPARATE SHEET)**

International application No.

PCT/JP2004/010544

Re Item V.

- 1 The following document is referred to in this communication:
D1 : EP 0 356 242 A (ALLIED COLLOIDS LTD) 28 February 1990 (1990-02-28)

2 INDEPENDENT CLAIMS 1 and 9

The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of claims 1 and 9 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT. Document D1 discloses water soluble porous polymers formed by polymerization of aqueous monomer solutions containing bubbles (D1: example 7, col 5/l 10-14). The polymer has an excellent solubility in water (according to example 7 of D1) and has a voids ratio of at least 25 % based on the volume of the polymer (D1: col 4/l 57-62).

3 DEPENDENT CLAIMS 2-8, 10-12

Dependent claims 2-8, 10-12 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step (Article 33(2) and (3) PCT).

Re Item VIII.

4 Clarity of independent claim 1

It is clear from the description that the following features are essential to the definition of the invention:

- (1.) Use of a photo polymerization initiator and a UV-VIS-light source in the polymerization process (p 6/l 15-20) or use of a reaction mixture having a specific viscosity (p 6/l 20-22 , p 8/l 17-27).
- (2.) A minimum content of monomer (p 9/l 1-20) (if the water content would be too high it is not possible to perform the process efficiently (however, this would be in contradiction to the posed problem)).

Since independent claim 1 does not contain these features it does not meet the requirement following from Article 6 PCT taken in combination with Rule 6.3(b) PCT that any independent claim must contain all the technical features essential to the definition of the invention.

- 5.1 There seems to be an inconsistency between the text passage on p 40/l 25-29 giving a range from 10 μ m - 1000 mm for the fragment size and the text passage on p 44/l 9 describing a range from 10 μ m - 10 mm. Such an inconsistency should be avoided in order not to render the claims unclear in the sense of Article 6 PCT. Moreover a fragment size of 1000 mm (= 1 m !), as mentioned on p 40, seems not to be of practical interest.
- 5.2 It is not clear how example 5 can be an example within the scope of the claims without bubbling of gas and without comprising a foaming agent.